



U. S. Department of Justice

***United States Attorney
Middle District of Georgia***

*Post Office Box 1702
Macon, Georgia 31202*

*Phone: 478-752-3511
Fax: 478-621-2604*

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**CONTACT: Sue McKinney
(478) 621-2602**

PLEA OF GUILTY ENTERED TO CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT BANK FRAUD

Michael J. Moore, United States Attorney for the Middle District of Georgia, announced that Gary Patton Hall, Jr., 47, of Tifton, Georgia, entered a plea of guilty today to Conspiracy to Commit Bank Fraud before the Honorable Hugh Lawson, Senior United States District Judge in Macon, Georgia.

In entering his plea of guilty, Mr. Hall admitted that from 2005 continuing through 2010, he committed bank fraud involving the Tifton Banking Company during his employment as President and CEO of the bank. Mr. Hall admitted that he conspired with others to obtain money, funds, credits, assets, securities, and other property of the Tifton Banking Company while carrying on a practice of replacing non-performing loans with new loans, including a Small Business Administration (SBA) guaranteed loan, to make the bank appear financially stronger than it was. The actions caused monetary losses to the bank and SBA of approximately \$2.8 million. Mr. Hall continued these illegal activities even during the time that the bank applied for and received assistance from the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), a government program established to help financial institutions during a financial crisis in an attempt to save the failing bank.

The plea agreement entered into by Mr. Hall and the United States Attorney calls for a sentence of sixty-five months in federal prison based upon an agreement as to what would be the appropriate calculations for determining sentence length under the federal sentencing guidelines. The decision as to whether or not to accept this recommendation will be made by the Court at the time of sentencing. The maximum possible sentence under the law is thirty years imprisonment, a maximum fine of \$1,000,000.00, or both, a term of supervised release of up to five years, and a mandatory assessment fee of \$100.00. Sentencing is currently set for September 30, 2013.

The case was investigated by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Special Inspector General for TARP (SIG-TARP), the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Small Business Administration, and the Tift County Sheriff's Office. Assistant United States Attorney Robert D. McCullers is handling the prosecution for the Government.

Questions concerning this case should be directed to Sue McKinney, Public Affairs Specialist, United States Attorney's Office, at (478) 621-2602.

APPROVED FOR RELEASE

**MICHAEL J. MOORE
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY**